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President's Address on the Summit Conference

Mike Mansfield 1903-2001

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May 26, 1960

STATEMENT OF SENATOR MIKE MANSFIELD (D., MONT.)

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Mr. President:

The President delivered a temperate report to the American people last night on the circumstances surrounding the U-2 incident, the stillborn summit meeting and the present state of his foreign policy with respect to Soviet Russia. He emphasized once again what is clear to all who will see that, in our own interests, in the interests of humanity, the search for a durable peace must go on despite this setback. His administration, he stressed, will continue to negotiate with the Communists on disarmament, nuclear testing and other matters of vital importance to the entire world.

In that respect he put the basic problem of our foreign policy in a true perspective. The problem is to get the world out of the corner into which it has painted itself with the brush of mutual terror. This problem can be dealt with only by "reason and common sense," to use the President's words. It will hardly be dealt with by political debate which seeks to prove the relative degree of hardness or softness towards communism of Presidential candidates of either party. Along with the rest of the world we are walking too close to the edge of universal chaos and destruction to support that childish game any longer. We will either choose our next President on the basis of character, maturity, integrity and wisdom or all of us, regardless of party, will pay the terrible price.

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As for the circumstances surrounding the Summit Conference and the U-2 incident the President may put any interpretation upon the events which he desires. The fact is, however, that there isn't anyone except, perhaps, Mr. Khrushchev who knows the reasons or lack of them for his actions at Paris which ended the meeting even before it began. There isn't anyone, including the President, who can measure with any accuracy the full impact of the U-2 incident on the subsequent failure of the Summit meeting.

We can rationalize, we can gloss-over that incident and so reassure or delude ourselves as to the effectiveness of the conduct of foreign policy by this administration. Nevertheless, while I do not wish to prejudge this matter, there remains a strong presumption that the U-2 incident, at the time it occurred, in the circumstances it occurred, and in the explanations which followed, was not an action taken on the "path of reason and common sense" and nothing that the President said last night changes that presumption. The adverse impact of the incident on our relations with Norway, Pakistan, and Japan which are already clearly discernable, alone, support that presumption. The need still remains for the Congress and the American people to get the facts. The need would have been there even if the Summit Conference had been a spectacular success. With due regard for the needs of security, it is our duty to get the facts to the end that the conduct of foreign policy and the related activities of defense and intelligence shall be fully coordinated in line with the President's policy of seeking peace by the "path of reason and common sense."

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One measure of that need lies in the foreign aid program for which the President, last night, made such a fervent plea for appropriations. Any incident which serves to heighten international tensions--as the U-2 incident most certainly did--increases the pressure for such appropriations and indeed for defense as well. Therefore, if we are ever to bring a degree of relief to the people who must foot these bills through taxation, we must also bring a degree of control over actions of the bureaucracy which may unnecessarily--accidentally or thoughtlessly or deliberately--heighten the tensions.

an Atlantic convention to explore the possibilities of bringing the people, bordering on the Atlantic, closer together? I understand such a proposal is now before Congress."

Governor Rockefeller: "Do I support the idea advocated by Justice Owen Roberts on many occasions in this room of bringing together the nations bordering on the Atlantic Ocean?"

"I do, providing we include our friends to the south. I feel very strongly that one of the great traditions in the free association of nations and people has been the Western Hemisphere tradition of the Pan-American Union. It was the concept of Simon Bolivar that as the old world empires broke up, something had to take their place; and he advocated that these free nations associate in the common interest—working together to develop a structure that would take the place of empires in the world. I think, myself, that it was one of the great concepts—comparable in a sense to the concept of our own founding fathers—and he was looking far into the future. I do feel that a conference, such as the one you mentioned, would be very useful, but I would like to see us consider, as members of the Atlantic community, the Western Hemisphere nations, all of them, bordering on the Atlantic."

Question: "Do you think that it is possible that these regional groupings might get together into full federations, at sometime in the future?"

Governor Rockefeller: "I would think, myself, that that would be, at some point, a very logical conclusion. Certainly the experience of the United States has been one of the most exciting and thrilling in the history of the world. I know that some of us are concerned about States rights, and we do our best to preserve them. Yet I think the Federal system has proven its tremendous strength and vitality. So I do not see why—where regions exist, with compatible objectives on the part of the people—they should not ultimately lead to confederation."

Question: "Do you have a word for us on China?"

Governor Rockefeller: "Do I have a word for you on China? Focus—or for the Soviets or for the free nations in Asia—China presents a fantastic problem. I think that we have got to be continually looking ahead. We have to be trying to find how we can get ourselves into a position of initiative—and not into a position of stalemate—with that group of extraordinary able people, of brilliant people with a great history with a great civilization. I think that the China cannot be written off. Now the process of how we do this—how we get from where we are to where we need to be with respect to China, while being always faithful to our basic beliefs—this is one of the great challenges which this Nation and our allies face."

"Thank you very much indeed. I appreciate your coming."

THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS ON THE SUMMIT CONFERENCE

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, the President delivered a temperate report to the American people last night on the circumstances surrounding the U-2 incident, the stillborn summit meeting, and the present state of his foreign policy with respect to Soviet Russia. He emphasized once again what is clear to all who will see that, in our own interests, in the interests of humanity, the search for a durable peace must go on despite this setback. His administration, he stressed, will continue to nego-

tiate with the Communists on disarmament, nuclear testing, and other matters of vital importance to the entire world.

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Mr. KUCHEL. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. MANSFIELD. I yield.

Mr. KUCHEL. I commend the distinguished acting majority leader for his comments. The Nation listened to the President last night. They listened to him speak as an American, who expressed the goals and hopes and prayers of the American people. He went to Paris as our American leader.

I believe that in the coming election the representatives of both the Democratic Party and the Republican Party who stand before the people as candidates for President and Vice President of the United States will be in agreement with respect to the sharing of the basic goal of the American people.

There will be no reason for Republicans to accuse Democrats or for Democrats to accuse Republicans of being soft on Communists because, Mr. President, as you and I and the Senate—and the country—agree that our goal is peace with justice in the world. There is no partisanship or politics in that hope. We all share it. As the able acting majority leader said the other day, we are all in this boat together.

I have the same feeling with respect to the comments of our Chief Executive last night that the distinguished junior Senator from Montana has. The President spoke as frankly as he could. He spoke temperately and with courage and with commendable frankness. He indicated once again not only our ever-ready willingness and our earnest desire to negotiate with the Soviet to try to find a way for enforceable nuclear test bans, for enforceable disarmament agreements, and for the peaceful and honorable settlement of those other painful problems which hang darkly over all the world. The President reflected the views of a united America in his statement of last night.

Mr. MANSFIELD. I thank the Senator from California. I wish to say that this shibboleth of being soft on communism, in my opinion, applies neither to the Republican Party nor to the Democratic Party.

Mr. GOLDWATER. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. MANSFIELD. I yield to the Senator from Arizona.

Mr. GOLDWATER. Mr. President, speaking as an American rather than as a member of either party, I wish to compliment the junior Senator from Montana for his constant temperance in these trying days. His has been a voice which has spoken out continuously for the proper American approach to a problem which involves all of us as Americans rather than as Democrats or Republicans.

Mr. President, I am hopeful that in the coming days of the campaign the same restraint which has been practiced by the distinguished junior Senator from Montana will be practiced by the candidates of both parties and by the conventions of both parties.

Mr. President, this is not a political matter. When the United States is threatened by an enemy, the American people solidify behind their leader.

Mr. President, I am happy to report that in my travels around the United States since the incident of the U-2 plane I have found a great admiration and a great respect for the President. I find the American people are solidly united behind him and solidly in favor of the program which produced the U-2 plane and which will produce any other system of espionage whereby the U.S. Government, its intelligence agencies and its military services, can acquire intelligence of the intentions of and the abilities of the Soviets. It is to me, Mr. President, as I believe it is to the majority of Americans, this intelligence, this knowing of the capabilities of our enemies and the probable action of our enemies, which is the most vital thing we have confronting us today as an object to be achieved.

Once again, Mr. President, I salute the Senator from Montana [Mr. MANSFIELD] for his constant temperance in the field of foreign relations and for his constant efforts to see that the best interests of America are served before those of his own party or of the party in opposition.

Mr. MANSFIELD. I thank the distinguished Senator.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. MANSFIELD. I yield to the Senator from New York.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. President, I wish to join in the commendation of the distinguished Senator from Montana, the acting majority leader, for the remarks he has made. It is typical of the attitude which he has displayed from the outset in this crisis. His commendation of the President for his address last evening is typical of the very fine attitude displayed by our friend from Montana.

The address of the President of the United States seemed to me to be a clear affirmation of America's determination to stand firm and a definite indication that this attitude of firmness will continue. I think his address will inspire confidence in our national defenses, particularly in our intelligence-gathering apparatus.

I was particularly impressed by the fact that the President devoted a considerable part of his address to and ended his address by looking toward the

future, which is something we all must do, regardless of anything which may have happened in the past. He clearly outlined some of the steps we should take, including particularly his intention to assist the United Nations in making available equipment for satellite reconnaissance.

I do not know what has been the experience of other Members of this body, but my mail has reflected a very great change in the attitude of the people who have communicated with me over the period since the initial incident took place. This was, of course, before the President made his address. Originally there apparently was a feeling on the part of many that there had been a great blunder made and that this had seriously damaged our Nation. More recently there has been an overwhelming indication in the mail which I have received in support of the position taken by our Government. Upon thoughtful reflection, for the most part, Americans think this is a sound position.

In the minds of nearly all of these people, the onus for scuttling the summit conference rests solely on Mr. Khrushchev. His motives, of course, are not positively known but events make very clear that Mr. Khrushchev came to Paris with the fixed intention to scuttle the conference and if the U-2 incident had not been seized as a pretext, something else would have been.

Like the distinguished Senator from Montana, I found the address of the President informative, clear, and couched in dignified, nonpartisan language. That same high level characterized the Senator's remarks this morning, in which he joined with Americans of all parties in expressing the sentiments that we face this situation together and shall continue to do so, and also shall continue to maintain without partisan consideration those policies of firmness and strength which alone assume a lasting and a just peace.

Mr. MANSFIELD. I thank the Senator.

Mr. GORE. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?

Mr. MANSFIELD. I yield to the Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. GORE. Like the Senator from Montana, I can find, and did find, praiseworthy elements in President Eisenhower's speech last evening. I was glad to note his proposal to cooperate with the United Nations. I was pleased to hear him say that he favored businesslike negotiations with the Soviet Union, and that these must continue.

The lack of careful summit preparations—the agreement to hold a summit conference without precise understandings as to what would be discussed, in what context, and what agreements were likely or possible to be reached—were, according to all of the diplomatic experience of the United States, unbusinesslike in character. Personal diplomacy failed; summitry failed. They failed in part because they were unbusinesslike. Would the Senator from Montana agree with that?

Mr. MANSFIELD. I would say, in response to the question raised by the

Senator from Tennessee, on the basis of the record which he made in the asking of questions in the Foreign Relations Committee, that there is ground to state there was not enough, perhaps, in the way of preparation, plans, or procedures. I think the record will bear out that statement, from the colloquy which took place between the Senator from Tennessee and the Secretary of State at a hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations.

Mr. GORE. Mr. President, will the Senator yield further?

Mr. MANSFIELD. I yield.

Mr. GORE. As I have stated, though there were commendable parts, commendable elements, in the President's statement, I must be frank to say I did not think the President in the speech last night faced up to the extremes in ineptitude which resulted, in part, in the worst diplomatic debacle which human experience affords.

The President made general reference to an initial covering statement with respect to the U-2 flight. I ask the Senator from Montana if he regards the later statement by the State Department as a so-called covering statement. On May 6, Mr. Lincoln White, of the State Department, said:

There was no deliberate attempt to violate Soviet airspace and there never has been.

SERVING OF OLEOMARGARINE OR MARGARINE IN NAVY RATION

The Senate resumed the consideration of the bill (S. 2168) to amend the Navy ration statute so as to provide for the serving of oleomargarine or margarine.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The hour of 10:30 a.m. having arrived, the Senate, under its order of yesterday, will now proceed to the consideration of the Proxmire-Prouty amendment to S. 2168 under limitation of debate and control of time.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the morning hour be extended for 5 minutes, and that the 5 minutes be added to the time, if necessary, on the debate on the Proxmire-Prouty amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair informs the Senator from Montana that 12:30 p.m. has been fixed as a time certain for voting upon the amendment.

Mr. MANSFIELD. I ask the Senator from Wisconsin [Mr. PROXMIRE] if he will grant me 2 minutes under the time which he controls?

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. PROXMIRE in the chair). Two minutes are yielded to the Senator from Montana.

Mr. MANSFIELD. I believe the Senator completed his question. I do not know definitely, but I would question that this was a covering statement. May I say to the Senator that the President at the White House conference this morning expressed his full and wholehearted approval of the inquiry which is to be undertaken tomorrow by the Committee on Foreign Relations, of which the distinguished Senator from Tennessee is a member, and which is

under the chairmanship of the Senator from Arkansas [Mr. FULBRIGHT].

Mr. GORE. I am glad the President has given his approval. The many questions unanswered leave the Senate committee no choice but to try diligently and earnestly to inform the American people. It is only by demonstrating to the world that we are determined to learn from our mistakes and correct them that we can demonstrate the will of this great Nation to follow a path of rectitude, moral strength, and correct policy. As a member of the committee—

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The time of the Senator from Tennessee has expired.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, will the Senator from Wisconsin yield 1 additional minute?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. One minute additional is yielded to the Senator from Montana.

Mr. GORE. As a member of the committee, I will participate with my distinguished colleague to this end.

Mr. MANSFIELD. Mr. President, in reply, I agree with what the Senator from Tennessee has just said. He has always been frank in his comments. He has always been reasonable and constructive in his attitudes, and I feel that much in the way of benefits could be derived from this hearing, which will be conducted by the Foreign Relations Committee. I commend the Senator from Tennessee for his remarks not only today but on previous occasions as well. We are all indebted to him because he has, over the years, made many real and valuable contributions to our foreign policy and our security. He has proved to his colleagues that he is a man of conviction, knowledge, and deep understanding.

Mr. JAVITS. Mr. President, I ask the Senator from Wisconsin if he will yield 2 minutes?

Mr. PROXMIRE. I yield 2 minutes to the Senator from New York.

Mr. JAVITS. Mr. President, in connection with all the world comments which we are hearing on the President's address, I believe one thing must be made clear. This address, coupled with the historic event opening tomorrow of the hearings before the Foreign Relations Committee, and the continuing hearings before the Subcommittee on National Policy Machinery, of which I have the honor to be a member, gives an unparalleled opportunity to show the world our society operating at its best. Because, rarely in history has any statesman talked to the people of the United States as the President did last night. He spoke with great frankness, laying it on the line as to where we were wrong and where we were right.

I have little doubt the same position will feature the testimony released by the Foreign Relations Committee. The subcommittee of which I am a member is holding a hearing with George Kennan in public and at which I am sure there will be a most thorough airing of the policymaking machinery aspects of this whole difficult situation in which we found ourselves such a short time ago.

Mr. GORE. Mr. President, will the Senator yield?